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REMARKS

In the last Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-15 as being anticipated by Hughes. The Examiner's reasons for this rejection are considered to be in error and reconsideration in view of the following arguments is requested.

First, it should be clearly understood that claim 1 actually recites a very specific automatic information filtering method with explicitly recited operations in an explicitly recited order, and it is not directed to a broad idea of information filtering in general.

In the automatic information filtering method of claim 1, whether the URL of the entered HTML information is a top page URL or not is judged first. If it is a top page URL, words appearing in the information indicated by that top page URL (i.e., not that URL itself but the information provided at that URL) are extracted and the automatic filtering to judge whether this information is inappropriate or not is carried out. If it is judged to be inappropriate, an upper level URL derived from that top page URL is registered into an inappropriate upper level URL list and the presentation of the information indicated by that top page URL is blocked. On the other hand, if the URL of the entered HTML information is not a top page URL, this URL is compared with each URL registered in the inappropriate upper level URL list, and if there is a matching URL in the inappropriate upper level URL list, the presentation of information indicated by this URL is blocked, whereas if there is no matching URL in the appropriate upper level URL list, words appearing in the information indicated by that URL (i.e., not that URL itself, but the information provided at that URL) are extracted and the automatic filtering to judge

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whether this information is inappropriate or not is carried out. Then, if it is judged to be inappropriate, the presentation of the information indicated by that URL is blocked.

In other words, when the URL of the entered HTML information is either a top page URL or a non-top page URL with no matching URL registered in the inappropriate upper level URL list, the automatic filtering according to words extracted from the information indicated by that URL is carried out to determine whether the presentation of the information indicated by that URL should be blocked or not. On the other hand, when the URL of the entered HTML information is a non-top page URL with a matching URL registered in the inappropriate upper level URL list, the presentation of the information indicated by that URL is immediately blocked without carrying out the automatic filtering. Here, the upper level URLs registered in the inappropriate upper level URL list are derived from the top page URLs whose information was found inappropriate in the past.

In this way, it becomes possible to judge the inappropriateness of the HTML information accurately even in the case of an almost textless page in which only images are presented (see page 26, lines 14 to page 27, line 8 and Fig. 6 of the present specification). This effect cannot be achieved unless the specific automatic information filtering method, as explicitly recited in claim 1, is used.

In contrast, Hughes completely fails to disclose any teaching for the specific way of using the upper level URL derived from the top page URLs indicating inappropriate information, or the specific way of using the automatic filtering based on words extracted from the information (page) indicated by the URL, as explicitly recited in claim 1.

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The Hughes invention is directed to an undesirable content filtering using the primary filter list and the URL keyword search, i.e., a detection of a prescribed word in the URL itself. Also, in col. 2, lines 17-26 newly noted by the Examiner, Hughes only describes the conventional filtering using the word lists and phrase pattern matching techniques, which has the drawback of requiring a great deal of computer processor time and power. However, as explained above, the automatic information filtering method of claim 1 is neither an undesirable content filtering using the primary filter list and the URL keyword search, nor filtering using the words lists and phrase pattern matching techniques.

The Examiner's references to Russell-Falla and Humes appear pointless, since the basis for rejection of claims 1-15 is anticipation by Hughes. None of the claims were rejected on the basis of a combination of Hughes and Russell-Falla or a combination of Hughes and Humes, or a combination of the three. Russell-Falla at col. 2, line 39 to col. 4, line 23 and Humes at col. 2, lines 30 to col. 4, line 27 quoted by the Examiner separately describe features of their respective information filtering methods, but completely fail to suggest or imply the specific combination of the features as explicitly recited in claim 1.

Clearly, Hughes does not anticipate claim 1, and the Examiner's rejection based on Hughes is totally groundless. The same argument also applies to the dependent claim 2, as well as corresponding apparatus claims 3 and 4 and corresponding medium claims 5 and 6.

Next, it should be clearly understood that claim 7 actually recites an alternative automatic information filtering method with features substantially different from those of claim 1. Claim 7 is not anticipated by Hughes. Claim 7 is directed to another very specific automatic information

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filtering method with explicitly recited operations in an explicitly recited order, and it is not directed to the broad idea of information filtering in general.

In the automatic information filtering method of claim 7, the automatic learning using learning data containing both inappropriate information and appropriate information is carried out to obtain a word weights of words, and these word weights are stored and managed in correspondence to respective words. Then, the words contained in the entered information (page) are extracted and a total sum of the word weights of these extracted words is calculated, and whether the presentation of the entered information should be blocked or not is judged according to the calculated total sum of the word weights.

In contrast, Hughes completely fails to disclose any teaching for the specific way of using the word weights obtained by the automatic learning, or the specific way of using the total sum of the words weights of the words extracted from the entered information (page) in judging the presentation of the entered information.

As already mentioned above, Hughes only describes an undesirable content filtering using the primary filter list and the URL keyword search and the conventional filtering using the words lists and phrase pattern matching techniques. However, as explained above, the automatic information filtering method of claim 7 is neither an undesirable content filtering using the primary filter list and the URL keyword search, nor the filtering using the words lists and phrase pattern matching techniques.

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It is also pointed out that the Examiner's response to previous arguments in sections 17 and 18 of the Office Action completely fails to address these features of claim 7 which are substantially different from those of claim 1.

Clearly, the Hughes patent does not anticipate claim 7. The Examiner's rejection based on Hughes, should be withdrawn and claim 7 should be allowed.

The same argument also applies to the dependent claims 8 and 9, as well as corresponding apparatus claims 10-12 and corresponding medium claims 13-15.

In conclusion, the Examiner's rejection based on Hughes is inappropriate. Each of claims 1-15 is patentably distinct over Hughes and should be allowed. The additional prior art (Russell-Falla and Hurnes) cited by the Examiner, but not relied upon, do not teach or suggest the subject matter of the claims. The present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance are solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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I hereby certify that this paper is being transmitted via facsimile to the attention of Office of the Examiner Hai V. Nguyen, Art Unit 2142 in the United States Patent and Trademark Office EXPEDITED PROCEDURE at facsimile number (703) 872-9306 on May 10, 2004.

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